

St. John Emlenton 11:00 10/26/69

*Processional Hymn 12

*Choral Call to Worship

*Confession of Sin

*Assurance of Pardon

~~Hand RESPONSIVE READING SFZ 56 Pg 603.~~

Scripture 1 Cor. 13

*Gloria Patri

*Apostles Creed

*Pastoral Prayer

Announcements

ANNIVERSARY NOV 9TH 11:00 AM SILKS

LUNCHEON & SOCIAL HOUR

LUNCHEON FOLLOWING SERVICE

CHURCH WED 7:15

VISITORS

Offering, Prayer

*Hymn 226

Sermon

Prayer & Lord's Prayer

*hymn 35

*Benediction

*Threefold Amen

*Postlude

The Gospel of Love

Text: Romans 13:10 Jerusalem Bible

Love is the one thing that cannot hurt your neighbor.

The events of the past weeks and months should cause us to take a close look at the words that were written such a long time ago. Many people today, think and feel that these words were only intended for those to whom they were written, They only applied in other words to those people around two thousand years ago. But if we examine the words of Jesus we can find answers for our present day and age.

If we look closely at the meeting Jesus had with the Pharisees we can see at once that their motives were not exactly pure. They came to Him hoping to trip Him up and "get the goods" on Him so they could destroy Him. First they flattered Him, and then they coated their words with honey, so the following words would not seem too damaging to Jesus. Many people act like this today. We see in the movies or on television a humorous picture involving two women, where one remarks rather cattily, "How nice you look, dear." While all the time we can see the daggers shining in her eyes and she is really thinking, "My, how horrible you look." But these Pharisees said to Him, "Master, we know you are an honest man, that you are not afraid of anyone, because a man's rank means nothing to you, and that you teach the way of God in all honesty. Is it permissible to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay, yes or no?" Here is where they thought they had the trap ready to spring ~~shut~~ on Him. If He answers, "No, don't pay taxes, but just be true to God," then Jesus is talking against Caesar, and He is guilty of treason. But we are told He saw through their hypocrisy and asked for a coin. His answer, "Give to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God," was a real shocker for these people and totally unexpected.

Then if we look at the words of Paul we see that he is admonishing the people to obey the laws, ^{to} be law abiding. To ~~not~~ be afraid of the magistrates for only the criminal need be afraid. Then he tells them the commandments are to be kept, ~~and~~ not forgotten. But one thing to remember is the importance of the two

commandments of Jesus. The first one is to love God completely and the second is to love your neighbor as yourself. Paul is reiterating these words. He tells ~~them~~ ^{says}, "We is the one thing that cannot hurt your neighbor." Yet if we look at our society we don't see much in the way of love, do we? ^{Instead,} ~~We~~ ^{Instead,} see hatred, instead. We see it between races. We see it between religions. We see it in our national politics, between men and parties. And Yes, we even see it in our Churches. Many of the movements that started out legitimately in this country, have become nothing more than an excuse to do whatever one pleases and to disregard the rights and privileges of everyone else. This may include fire-bombing someone's home or business. Or It may involve sniping at someone with a rifle. Or even demonstrating by smashing windows and store fronts. No one seems to care what happens just so long as we keep the big, bold ^{doing these things for} headlines aglow by showing that ~~we~~ have a cause ~~we are doing these things for~~.

In a recent issue of Christianity Today, there is an article about the National Council of Churches. It points out that at one of their recent sessions a policy statement was proposed and passed by and 81 to 6 vote. It stated, "We recognize that when justice cannot be secured either through action within existing structures or through civil disobedience, an increasing number of Christians may feel called upon to seek justice through resistance or revolution." Now this is a group of very learned men. They are ~~also~~ supposed to represent Christianity. If this is the message that Jesus spoke then I think I am reading the wrong book. I am reading His message wrong. He never advocated hatred and violence. His message was one of love for one another. And this isn't just my idea either. In the same issue of Christianity Today is a summary of the news. The title of this article is, "Back to violence as usual." The very first sentence states, "1968 may go down as the year in which the world tried to cope with violence while ecumenical assemblies sought to encourage it."

We have had all types of violence in our nation. ~~We have had Seven~~
^{Persons have been} Several prominent people ^{shot and killed.} Then The hue and cry arose that we should have gun control laws. Every politician and legislator worth his salt proposed it so the measure would carry his name ~~and~~ and identify him as being on the right track.

This past week someone tried to assassinate the premier of Greece with a bomb and then with fire bombs. I made the facetious remark to someone that we need gasoline control laws so that the threat from fire bombs would be nonexistent. Now of course this is ridiculous and equally ridiculous is the thought that registering guns will stop crime and violence. Why don't we register all paring knives, carving knives, pocket knives and screwdrivers? All of these can and ~~has~~ ^{Each} been used to commit murder. Of all the proponents of gun legislation, I have not heard or read of anyone of them making any kind of remark concerning the looting of a store in Watts, Los Angeles this week. There were over one hundred guns as well as ammunition stolen. Have you heard any gun law proponent ~~speak~~ ^{speak} ~~tell~~ ^{about} this? This is ~~only~~ ^{but} one of many instances that ~~has~~ ^{should} taken place ~~in this~~ ^{in these} ~~area~~ ^{persons}. I think the time has come when we ~~should~~ call a spade a spade. That we should stop protecting these people. That we should start treating them as criminals. Do you know why this violence took place in Watts? It was because those big, bad, brutal police were arresting a woman for being drunk and disorderly. In other words, they were doing their job and were hampered from it by these ~~people~~ ^{sons}. Will gun control laws stop this? Of course not. The time has come that we ~~should~~ ^{must} stop protecting these hoodlums simply because their skin is black. It ~~would seem~~ ^{seems} like we are afraid to do anything to these people. The laws have been made for the black as well as the white. I do not think that any white man should receive preferential treatment because he is white. If he is guilty of a crime then he deserves to be punished for it. And I think this applies to all Americans.

We have many ministers and priests leading protests and marching for different causes. Perhaps some of this is ~~proper~~. However, I think that some of these men are guilty of causing the hatred and violence that has come about. Recently I had a conversation with a friend of mine who happens to be a minister, and he was telling of a fellow minister who went down to Mississippi and marched in a demonstration. Upon his return he was boasting about the amount of courage it took to do this. My friend, Paul, remarked that he told him it did not require too much "guts" to march with several hundred thousand other people. But it required more "guts" to stand up in his pulpit and point out the issues that should be ~~painted~~ ^{raised} ~~out within~~ ^{for} his own congregation. This is the truth. It does require

more so called "guts" to speak out when you are ^{the} only ~~one~~ voice.

In the musical comedy, "The Music Man" the male lead ~~part~~ of Prof. Harold Hill has one of the most appropriate songs along these lines. In the movie version the part was played by Robert Preston, perhaps many of you saw it. However, one of the songs he sings tells of this little town of River City. He sings, "You've got troubles right here in River City." Well we can say that this morning. We can say that, "We've got troubles, right here in Emleton." We ^{can} walk out that back door of this church and talk all we want about civil rights. But tell me, do we actually have that problem here? Of course we don't. But we have people who need spiritual and financial help. We have people who are unchurched, who need to be contacted and asked to come to worship and to accept Jesus Christ. We have a problem with young hoodlums driving right down main street on Friday and Saturday night at two and three o'clock in the morning. Oh yes, I hear them almost every week. They drive at tremendous speeds without regard for anyone else. And no one does anything about it. Nothing until they kill someone and then it ^{will be} ~~is~~ too late. These are our problems and these are the things we should be trying to fight ~~against~~. We don't need to go to Little Rock, Arkansas, or Mississippi or anywhere else. Jesus said something most of us forgot or else have overlooked. He said, "Before you take the splinter out of the eye of someone else, first take the beam out of your own." Someone else has coined the expression ~~in~~ differently. He said to sweep the dirt from in front of your own door before you sweep the dirt from someone else's door. But the gist is the same and it means that we should take care of our own problems before we try to take care of the problems of the rest of the world.

An Episcopal priest was spending his vacation in the back woods country and while out for a stroll he lost his way. He stopped at the first farm he came to and asked for directions. The old farmer told him, and then the priest asked for a drink of water and the farmer obliged. During this time they became involved in conversation, ~~and~~ the priest told the farmer who he was and what he did. The farmer remarked that it was indeed strange since he was also an Episcopalian. The priest inquired to what parish he belonged and the farmer replied that he didn't know nothing about any parish. Then the priest asked who confirmed him.

The farmer said he didn't know anything about that either. "Well how can you be an Episcopalian then," he asked. The farmer said, "Well you see it was this way. Last winter I went to church and the sign out side said E-piscopal. I went in and this here feller got up front and he says that they had done things they hadn't oughter done. And they had left undone things they oughter of done, and I says to myself, 'thats my fix exactly, and I've been an E-piscopal ever since."

Now this is how many of us act. We know what we should do and we know what we should ^{not} be doing, but somehow or other we have lost sight of these things. We should be trying to bring others not only into church but to Jesus Christ. Yet we do about it, if indeed we do about it at all, ~~that we do absolutely nothing toward this end. We seem to be trying to keep our own little churches~~ ^{Seemingly try} ~~and~~ ^{It is only} ~~as~~ like an exclusive club. It is only open to those who ^{have} ~~been~~ meet the standards. Our churches are like closed shops. In order to belong you must dress a certain way, or earn a certain amount, or meet some man-made rule.

Jesus said, "Go into the world and baptize all men." Not just me, but all men. Not just those who are acceptable to our standards or who can meet our entrance requirements, But all men. We need to start loving our fellow man. We need to start solving our own problems before we start curing the ills of the world. Our love as Christians should shine forth from our lives ^{as} ~~like~~ a beacon. ^{Persons} People should be able to look at us and say, "There goes a Christian." We should be the example of what Jesus was. We should be striving to reach the unchurched, the unlovable and the rejects of society. Did Jesus spend His time with those who were well off, or those who were better off than anyone else? No, He didn't. His time was spent with ^{The} ~~these~~ rejects of society. For this He wore the label the Pharisees and the Saducees and the Scribes tacked on Him. This is the label you and I should wear, and wear proudly. We should be seeking to grow just a little closer to our Master and our prayer should be as the poem entitled, "My Daily Prayer," by Grenville Kleiser. Let me share it with you.

"If I can do some good today, If I can serve along life's way,

If I can something helpful say, Lord, show me how.

If I can right a human wrong, If I can help to make one strong,

If I can cheer with smile or song, Lord, show me how.

If I can aid one in distress, If I can make a burden less,
If I can spread more happiness, Lord, show me how.
If I can do a kindly deed, If I can help someone in need,
If I can sow a fruitful seed, Lord, show me how.
If I can feed a hungry heart, If I can give a better start,
If I can fill a nobler part, Lord, show me how.

If we could each live and act in this way our lives would not only be more complete, but we could be the instruments through which the kingdom of God would be greatly advanced. Then the love that is needed in ^{our} ~~our~~ time would become a reality and we would each come to know the truth of the words of Paul, "Love is the one thing that cannot hurt your neighbor."

Call to worship: I have fled when the Lord called to me,
Let us go to the house of the Lord.

Call to Confession: They who wait for the Lord
shall renew their strength, they shall mount up
with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be
weary, they shall walk and not faint, Let us come
to God in confession.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Assurance of pardon: There is therefore no condemnation
for those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not
according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.

5/25 Our Lord said for his
house by Hoffman Aux.